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ABSTRACT

A developmental approach to counseling supervision proposes that counseling trainees develop in predictable ways over the course of their training, that supervision environments should change to match trainees' needs, and that a congruent supervision environment will better meet the learning needs of trainees. To explore the developmental approach to counseling supervision, a two-scale instrument representing the counselor complexity model of Cal Stoltenberg was developed representing supervisee characteristics (P-scale) and the supervision environment (E-scale). This Developmental Level Determination Scale was administered to 71 supervisors for 107 supervisees and supervisory environments at 9 university counseling centers. Each supervisor filled out a P-scale and an E-scale for each supervisee at the two-thirds point of the semester. At the end of the semester data on satisfaction and learning were collected from both supervisors and supervisees. Results confirmed the model in which trainees progress in counselor complexity level over the course of training. Results also indicated that, in general, supervisors provided different levels of supervision over the course of training. The congruency hypothesis was not supported, since person-environment mismatch was not related to supervisor or supervisee satisfaction. The findings support the validity of the developmental approach to counselor supervision. (JAC)

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DEVELOPMENTAL COUNSELING SUPERVISION: PERSON-ENVIRONMENT CONGRUENCY, SATISFACTION, AND LEARNING

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Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, August 23-27, 1982.

Symposium: The Supervisory Process
and Supervisee Training Level: Homeostatic or Varient?

Presentation: Developmental Counseling Supervision:
Person-Environment Congruency, Satisfaction, and Learning

Presenter: Mary O'Leary Wiley
Counseling Center
Ithaca College

Presented at the American Psychological Association
National Convention, Washington, D.C., August 25, 1982

The present study is one on counseling supervision. More specifically it is a study exploring a developmental approach to counseling supervision that proposes that (a) counseling trainees develop in a predictable way over the course of their graduate training, (b) counseling supervision environments should change in ways that match the needs of the trainee, and (c) trainees provided with a supervision environment that is congruent with their needs will be more satisfied and will learn more than those in incongruent environments.

Because the research literature was sparse, this study was based on theoretical literature, specifically on an article published in the Journal of Counseling Psychology in 1981 by Cal Stoltenberg. This article proposed what Stoltenberg referred to as the Counseling Complexity Model. His ideas are a combination of Hogan's work in 1964 in the area of counselor development, and Hunt's 1971 work in the area of cognitive complexity. Stoltenberg described four levels of counselor development, and four levels of supervision environments that provide for optimum learning at each level. Each of the four levels is described on the first page of the handout.

In general, Level I trainees are described by Stoltenberg as being dependent, lacking in self-assurance, as thinking categorically, as imitative, and lacking in experience. Their optimum supervision environment is one where instruction, interpretation, support, awareness training, and a high degree of structure are provided. As is detailed more specifically in Handout B, these parameters are added to or

changed in specification as one moves through Levels II and III and ultimately to the master counselor condition of Level IV characterized by adequate self-awareness, insightfulness about their own strengths and weaknesses, inter-dependency, and having a firm sense of professional and personal identity. Their supervision environment becomes collegial if supervision is continued.

Because the Counselor Complexity model is a comprehensive, developmental model of counseling supervision and because it has intuitive appeal, this study became one that explored the ideas in Stoltenberg's article in an attempt to empirically validate them. There were three general research questions preceded by a critical research problem. The research questions were first, do supervisees change in the ways predicted by Stoltenberg over the course of their training? Second, do supervisors provide different supervision environments as proposed by Stoltenberg over the course of the supervisee's training? And third, is congruency in person level and environment level related to higher satisfaction and learning? The research problem immediately was to develop a means of representing the model using an instrument, and varifying such an instrument by suitable collection of data.

Before such an instrument could be developed it was necessary to clarify the model that Stoltenberg had described. Although its ideas had a great deal of face validity, they were fuzzy and inconsistent in that each topic he discussed was not mentioned by him at each of the levels. Thus, the first step in this research was to redefine the model in the form of grids as presented on pages 2 and 3 of the hand-out. These grids were an attempt to provide a framework that sampled the complexity of factors in the model and at the same time represented them more precisely and uniformly over level categories.

The process followed to develop these grids was to first identify from his article all the descriptive phrases provided by Stoltenberg for each person and environment level. Second, these phrases were arranged according to categories

(for example, all of his phrases about supervisee confidence were arranged according to level). And third, cells in the almost completed grid that were not addressed by Stoltenberg were filled in, making every effort to be consistent with the model. I say this to point out that the left hand column was not proposed by Stoltenberg, but rather was organized for this study in an attempt to find dimensions that were of generally equal importance and that changed over each of the four levels. Those of you familiar with the article or the model will recognize that in so doing a number of dimensions have been excluded and some have been somewhat restructured. Our validity data suggests that there has been no violation of the essential concepts or constructs proposed in the model.

To describe briefly, an instrument consisting of two scales was generated directly from the grids by converting each of the twenty cells into a Likert item and arranging those items, in a random order. On each scale the Likert ratings representing each of the four levels were added up and the level most consistently selected as most characteristic of the supervisee becomes the level identification for the person via the "P-scale" or the supervision environment via the "E-scale". The instrument was called the Developmental Level Determination Scale. It is important to note that the scales were designed to tap the predominant level, since no supervisee or supervision environment is purely one level. Congruency was determined by looking at the difference between the level of the supervisee and the level of his or her environment.

The procedures for this study involved the supervisor responding to both the P and E-scales for the supervisee thereby providing an indication of the level he or she perceives the supervisee to be at and the level of the supervision environment he or she believes was being provided in the supervisory relationship. The difference between these two perceived levels is regarded as an index of person/environment congruence. Technical data, yielded by pilot studies prior to the field study,

in the form of content validity and test-retest reliability support the usage of the instrument for research purposes. Should time and interest permit at the end of the program I'd be glad to talk about the pilots. Thus, with this instrumentation it was believed we might reasonably be able to test relevant research hypotheses at an empirical level.

The supervisee-supervisor dyads identified as the subjects in this study were obtained from counseling centers at nine major universities distributed over a region extending from the East Coast to the Great Plains and from our northern to southern borders. Eight states were represented. Sixty five percent of the supervisors held doctorates in counseling psychology, clinical psychology or counselor education, and twenty eight percent were predoctoral interns. Supervisees varied in training level and experience from first semester of practicum through nine semesters of practicum. All nine institutions were involved in training graduate students from early masters practicum through pre-doctoral internships.

Supervisors filled out a P-scale and an E-scale for each participating supervisee at the two thirds point of the semester. This point was chosen because it was far enough into the semester for the supervisor to have a feel for both the supervisee and their supervision sessions, and yet not so late that it would essentially be a post-test. Seventy one supervisors filled out questionnaires on 107 supervisees and supervision environments.

At the end of the semester, data on satisfaction and learning were collected from <u>both</u> supervisors and supervisees. Each was sent a demographic data sheet, as well as two Likert items: one asking them to rate their satisfaction with the supervision, and the other asking them to rate improvement in the supervisee's counseling skill as a result of the supervision. These items were taken directly from the work of Worthington and Roehlke, who used them as outcome measures in a 1979 study of

supervision reported in the Journal of Counseling Psychology.

Thus, there were two independent variables--supervisee level and supervision environment level, and four dependent variables--satisfaction and learning reported by both the supervisee and the supervisor. Three major hypotheses were tested. First, is there any difference in counseling experience among the four levels of supervisees? Second, is there any difference in counseling experience among the supervisees receiving the four levels of supervision environments? And third, is there any difference on the four outcome measures by degree of congruency between person and environment levels?

A summary of the analyses is included on the last three pages of your handout. The first research question asked whether the developmental level of the supervisee was related to the amount of supervised and non-supervised counseling experience. This was first tested by a one-way ANOVA looking at the mean number of semesters of supervised counseling experience by developmental level of the supervisee according to the Counselor Complexity model. As can be seen in Table 4, this was significant at the .0001 level, with supervisees in the lower developmental levels of the model having less experience and those in the higher levels having more experience. A one-way ANOVA was then performed on the mean number of semesters of non-supervised counseling experience by developmental level of the supervisee. This was non-significant. These results provide support for the first hypothesis in that supervisees do seem to progress in developmental level over the course of their training, and that this progression is not related to non-supervised counseling experience.

The second research question asked whether the developmental level of the supervision environment was related to the amount of counseling experience of the supervisee. This was first tested by a one-way ANOVA looking at the mean number of semesters of supervised counseling experience by the developmental level of the supervision environment according to the Counselor Complexity model. As can be seen in Table 5, this was significant at the .005 level with supervisees having had more supervised experience receiving progressively higher levels of supervision according to the Counselor Complexity model. A one-way ANOVA was then performed on the mean number of semesters of non-supervised counseling experience by the developmental level of supervision being received. This was non-significant. These results provide support for the second hypothesis in that supervisors seem to provide higher developmental levels of supervision environments to supervisees as they gain more supervised counseling experience, but not as they gain non-supervised experience.

The third research question asked whether the degree of congruency between person and environment level was related to supervisor satisfaction, supervisee satisfaction, learning of the supervisee as reported by the supervisor, and supervisee self-reported learning. As can be seen in Table 6, there were ten Level I supervisees in the sample, 36 Level II supervisees, 30 at Level III, and 31 at Level IV, totally 107. Twelve of these supervisees were provided with a Level I environment, 56 with Level II, 28 with Level III, and eleven with Level IV. These combinations result in 56 congruent dyads, 29 where the supervisee was one level above the environment, 13 where the supervisee was two levels above the environment, eight where the environment was one level above the supervisee, and one where the environment was three levels above the supervisee.

In relating supervisor and supervisee satisfaction with degree of person-environment congruency, two one-way ANOVAs were performed on mean supervisor and supervisee satisfactions ratings by degree of congruency. The results were non-significant indicating that satisfaction was not related to the degree of congruency between the person and the environment.

Findings were similar in looking at the relationship between congruency and learning as reported by both the supervisor and the supervisee. The results of the two one-way ANOVAs were non-significant indicating that supervisee learning as reported by self and supervisor was not related to the degree of congruency between the person and the environment.

The results of the congruency analyses indicate that congruency is not related to satisfaction on the part of either the supervisor or the supervisee, nor to learning as reported by either the supervisor or the supervisee. It is difficult to interpret the non-significance of the congruency hypotheses, however, because as can be seen in Table 6, gross incongruities rarely occurred between supervisee level and the supervision environment level. It seems that intuitively supervisors vary their supervision style with the developmental level of the supervisee and therefore nearly all the subjects in the study were in fairly congruent environments. Further research needs to be done that can perhaps assess types of incongruencies and congruencies and how they relate to satisfaction and learning.

The results of this study, then, provide confirmation for a developmental model of supervisee development in that supervisees progress in Counselor Complexity level over the course of their training. The results also indicate that in general supervisors do provide different levels of supervision for supervisees over

the course of their training. The results do not provide support, however, for the congruency hypotheses in that person-environment mismatch is not related to satisfaction for either the supervisor or the supervisee, nor is supervisee learning as perceived by the supervisor or the supervisee.

The findings of this study have implications for practicing supervisors as well as for future research. To the extent that we can understand the process of becoming an effective Counseling Psychologist, we can better provide supervision that will enable supervisees to develop. This study was an attempt to assess whether a developmental conceptualization of the supervisee and his or her environment could be demonstrated empirically, and the results indicate that such a conceptual approach seems to be valid. Of course further research needs to be done. A longitudinal study of supervisees would give us a better sense of individual development over time. Studying supervisees' perceptions of themselves and their environment in addition to the supervisors' perspectives may provide us with a more thorough understanding of the process of becoming an effective counselor. Also, looking more closely at the concept of person-environment congruency to assess what variables do relate to satisfaction and learning could be a direction in which to proceed.

Handout B

Symposium: The Supervisory Process
and Supervisee Training Level: Homeostatic or Variant?

Presentation: Developmental Counseling Supervision:
Person-Environment Congruency, Satisfaction, and Learning

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Presented at the American Psychological Association
National Convention, Washington, D.C., August 25, 1982

Counselor Complexity Model
as reported by Stoltenberg in the
Journal of Counseling Psychology, 1981, 28, 59-65.

Table 1
Expected Counselor Characteristics and Appropriate Environments

Counselor/ Supervisee level	Counselor/Supervisee characteristics	Optimal Supervision Environments
1	Dependent on supervisor Imitative, neurosis bound, lacking self-awareness and other awareness, categorical thinking with knowledge of theories and skills, but minimal experience	Encourage autonomy within normative structure. Supervisor uses instruction, interpretation, support, awareness training, and exemplification; structure is needed
2	Dependency-autonomy conflict Increasing self-awareness, fluctuating motivation, striving for independence, becoming more self-assertive and less imitative	Highly autonomous with low normative structure. Supervisor uses support, ambivalence clarificatio exemplification, and less instruc ion; less structure is necessary
3	Conditional dependency Personal counselor identity is developing with increased insight, more consistent motivation, increased empathy, and more differentiated interpersonal orientation	Autonomous with structure provided by the counselor. Supervisor treats counselor more as a peer with more sharing, mutual exempli fication, and confrontation
4	Master counselor Adequate self- and other awareness, insightful of own strengths and weaknesses, willfully interdependent with others, and has integrated standards of the profession with personal counselor identity	Counselor can function adequately i most environments. Supervision now becomes collegia if continued

Table 2

An Elaboration of the Counselor Complexity Model:
Supervisee Levels

	Supervisee Level (P Level) I	II	III	IV
Row A Degree of confidence in present counseling skill	AI Usually lacks confidence in present counseling skills and is overwhelmed by own weaknesses	AII Characteristically fluctuates between feeling confident and feeling very inadequate about present counseling skills.	AIII Usually has a firm sense of confidence about his/her counseling skills, although he/she is shaken when challenged by clients, supervisors, and/or colleagues	AIV Has a consistent and firm sense of confidence about his/her counseling skills even when challenged by clients, supervisors, and colleagues
Row B Insight about impact on clients	BI Has very little awareness of his/her strengths, weaknesses, motivations, neurotic needs, etc. and their impact on clients	BII Is inconsistent awareness of his/her strengths, weaknesses, motivations,, neurotic needs, etc. and their impact on clients	BIII Is consistently aware of his/her strengths, weaknesses, motivations, neurotic needs, etc. and their impact on clients, but is only beginning to develop the capacity to use them as resources during the counseling session	BIV Is consistently aware of his/her strengths, weaknesses, motivations, neurotic needs, etc. and is able to use them as resources during counseling sessions.
Row C Approach to a theoretical framework	CI Is prone to readily identify with a theoretical school or individual practitioner without thorough consideration	CII Is beginning to view clients from a variety of perspectives and is becoming aware of a need to develop an internalized theoretical framework	CIII View clients from a variety of rather thoroughly examined perspectives and is testing out the goodness of fit of an internalized theoretical framework	CIV Is committed to a theoretical framework or composite which is internalized, integrated with his/her counseling behavior, and can be articulated
Row D Sense of professional identity	DI Nearly always looks to others for ideas about how he/she should behave as a counselor	DII Is developing an inner sense of self as a counselor but frequently looks to others for ideas about how he/she should behave as a counselor	DIII Has a well developed sense of self as counselor, but is only beginning to integrate it with his/her sense of self as a person	DIV Has essentially completed his/her sense of self as a counselor and integrated it with his/her sense of self as a person
Row E Awareness of limitation of counseling	EI Tends to regard counseling as all-powerful	EII Sees counseling as a very powerful instrument but is becoming vaguely aware and uneasy about a few limitations of counseling, such as the inappropriateness of counseling for some clients and/or problems	EIII Is clearly aware of a broad range of limitations of counseling, including the limits of counseling as a treatment per se, and is struggling to integrate this with his/her sense of self as a professional	EIV Clearly understands a broad range of limitations of counseling, including the limits of counseling as a treatment per se, and has essentially completed integrating this knowledge into a firm sense of professional identity

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Table 3

An Elaboration of the Counselor Complexity Model:
Optimal Supervision Environments

	Supervision Environment Level (E Level) I	II	III	IV
Row A Role of Supervisor	A I Supervisor most often serves as a directive instructor and model, providing readings, examples, opportunities for observation, and didactic instruction	A II Supervisor's role is moving away from that of a directive instructor, encouraging supervisee to try out and expand the skills already developed	A III Supervisor's role is that of mentor dealing with resolution of the personal and professional dilemmas of my supervisee, and an instructor on rare occasions	A IV Supervisor is primarily a collegial consultant
Row B Affective focus of supervision	B I Supervisee is unaware of many of the feelings he/she has in counseling and supervision and supervisor focuses on raising awareness of them	B II Supervisor focuses heavily on helping supervisee to clarify and deal with inner feelings and/or ambivalence toward both clients and supervisor	B III Supervisor focuses on establishing supervisee's sense of confidence and dealing with the feelings surrounding the development of a professional style and/or identity	B IV Supervisor helps supervisee deal with the feelings involved in integrating and consolidating his/her already developed personal and professional identities
Row C Cognitive/Skills focus of Supervision	C I Supervisor focuses on supervisee's applying skills and techniques learned in a classroom to a counseling situation	C II Developing supervisee's basic skills in strategizing and independent decision making is one of the major objectives	C III Supervisor emphasizes supervisee's conceptualization of cases in relation to each other	C IV The much subtler aspects of counseling such as timing and orchestrating receive much attention
Row D Dependency in supervision	D I Supervisee is almost always dependent for structure, advice, directions, and rules	D II Supervisee fluctuates between being dependent on independent of supervisor consistently	D III Supervisee is almost always completely independent, but on rare occations such as emergencies he/she falls back into dependence on supervisor	D IV Supervisee is essentially a fully independent professional
Row E Role of support and confrontation	E I Supervisee is unable to handle much confrontation, hence supervisor draws almost soley on supportive behaviors	E II Supervisor merging confrontative behaviors with primarily supportive style	E III Supervisor uses relatively equal amounts of support and confrontation	E IV There is rarely a need to support or confront supervisee

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Table 4
Mean number of semesters of practicum experience
by developmental level of supervisee

P Level	$\bar{X}$	SD	Range
Level I	2.2	1.5	1 to 5
Level II	2.6	2.0	2 to 8
Level III	4.2	2.3	1 to 9
Level IV	5.4	2.7	1 to 9

Summary of one-way ANOVA on mean number of semesters
of practicum experience by developmental level of supervisee

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Between	3	164.20	54.73	10.516**
Within	103	536.06	5.20	

** p = .0001

Table 5
Mean number of semesters of practicum experience
by developmental level of supervision environment

E Level	$\bar{X}$	SD	Range
Level I	1.7	1.0	1 to 4
Level II	3.8	2.5	1 to 9
Level III	4.1	2.5	1 to 9
Level IV	5.5	2.5	2 to 9

Summary of one-way ANOVA on mean number of semesters
of practicum experience by developmental level of supervision environment

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Between	3	82.59	27.53	4.591*
Within	103	617.67	5.99	

* p = .005

Table 6
Frequency of supervision dyads
by person and environment developmental level

Supervision Environment Level (E level)	Supervisee Level (P level) I	II	III	IV	Total
I	7	3	2	0	12
II	2	28	15	11	56
III	0	5	12	11	28
IV	1	0	1	9	11
Total	10	36	30	31	107